



# Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 TO-14 ADS-00 SSC-00 OCT-02  
SY-05 SYE-00 HA-05 SMS-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-07 H-01 INR-10 -03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 0001

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIJING

AMEMBASSY BONA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1110

USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR

CINCPAC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by *L. Kelley*

DATE *8/14/80*

( ) UNCLASSIFIED

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( ) DECLASSIFIED in PART

( ) UNCLASSIFIED

( ) Non-responsive info.

FOI NO or PA exemptions

TS authority to:

( ) CLASSIFIED as

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( ) DOWNGRADE TS to ( ) S or ( ) C, OADR

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KARACHI ALSO FOR RSS: CINCEUR AND CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLADS

E.I. 12065: GDS, 8/19/86 (GRIFFIN, GEORGE G.B.) OR-M

TAGS: ASEC, PEPR, PINS, PINT, SHUM, AF

SUBJ: BATTLES ERUPT NEAR KABUL

REF: KABUL 2363

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1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

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2. SUMMARY: RELATIVELY HEAVY FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN AND AROUND KABUL AUGUST 17 AND CONTINUED THROUGH THE NIGHT AUGUST 18-19. LENGTHY BOUTS OF HEAVY GUNFIRE WERE HEARD BY RESIDENTS OF THE CITY BUT THE CAUSE AND THE EXTENT OF THE FIGHTING ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. CONTINGENTS OF SOVIET ARMOR AND HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS LAUNCHED ANOTHER ATTACK ON RESISTANCE FIGHTERS AUGUST 15, PROMPTING MANY VILLAGERS TO MOVE INTO KABUL FOR SAFETY. THIS TIME ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PAGHMAN, SOME 15 KILOMETERS WEST OF KABUL, AFGHAN POLICE, OFTEN AIDED BY SOVIET TROOPS, HAVE CONTINUED SPOT CHECKS OF VEHICLES THROUGHOUT THE CITY DAY AND NIGHT, BUT THE PACE OF ASSASSINATIONS HAS INCREASED NONETHELESS. TRAVELERS REPORT AN UPSURGE IN FIGHTING IN SEVERAL OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THE REGIME STAGED ON OF ITS PERIODIC PROPAGANDA SHOWS ON AUGUST 17 AND PLANS ANOTHER FOR AUGUST 20. END SUMMARY

3. HEAVY GUNFIRE WAS HEARD BEGINNING ABOUT 2000 LOCAL TIME. ON AUGUST 17 IN THE GENERAL VICINITY OF KABUL AIRPORT. DISPLAYS OF FLARES AND TRACER SHELLS CONTINUED FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS. A SIMILAR OUTBURST WAS HEARD BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL ABOUT MIDDAY ON AUGUST 18, AND HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS WERE SEEN CONDUCTING APPARENT FIRING RUNS AROUND A HILL ABOUT A MILE EAST OF THE AIRPORT. AFGHAN RESIDENTS REPORTED HEAVY FIRING ON BOTH DAYS NEAR THE SOVIET ENCAMPMENTS AROUND THE SUBURBS OF KHAIR KHANA, BUT WERE UNABLE TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OR TARGET. THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR (PROTECT) CLAIMED TO HAVE INFORMATION THAT THE SOVIETS HAD LOST SIX MEN REPULSING RESISTANCE FIGHTERS. A MAJOR ASSAULT ON KABUL AIRPORT BY RESISTANCE FIGHTERS. THE ITALIAN CHARGE (PROTECT) SAID HE WAS TOLD BY AN AFGHAN ARMY2  
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DOCTOR THAT 32 RUSSIANS AND 20 MUJAHEDDIN WERE KILLED IN THE FRACAS. THE DOCTOR CLAIMED TO HAVE TREATED SEVERAL OTHER WOUNDED SOVIET TROOPS. OTHER AFGHANS INFORMED US THAT SIMILAR ACTIVITY OCCURRED NEAR THE SOVIET ENCAMPMENT CLOSE TO DURULAMAN PALACE ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE CITY ON AUGUST 17.

4. AN IMPECCABLE SOURCE WHO LIVES IN THE FORMER ROYAL RESORT TOWN OF PAGHMAN ABOUT 15 KILOMETERS WEST OF KABUL TOLD US AUGUST 18 ABOUT HAVING WATCHED A SOVIET ATTACK ON A NEARBY MUJAHEDDIN STRONGHOLD ON AUGUST 16 AND 17. THE SOVIETS ARRIVED IN

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PAGHMAN EARLY AUGUST 16 IN FOUR TANKS, 25 APCs AND "DOZENS" OF TRUCKS. AFTER THIS FORCE TOOK UP POSITIONS NEAR THE SHAR-I-BILAND SHRINE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PAGHMAN, FOUR MI-24 HELICOPTER SQUADS APPEARED AND BEGAN BOMBING AND STRAFING THE TOP OF A HILL AN AREA ABOVE THE SHRINE WHERE RESISTANCE FIGHTERS WERE KNOWN TO HAVE CAMPED A FEW DAYS BEFORE. THE HELICOPTERS, SPORADICALLY ASSISTED BY THE TANKS, KEPT UP THE ATTACK FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS. THEN AFTER A 30-MINUTE LULL, RESUMED FOR ANOTHER HOUR. (THE SOVIET TROOPS NEIGHT CONNED BATTLE HELMENTS NOR MOVED INTO THE AREA ON FOOT.)

5. CLEARLY VISIBLE TO ONLOOKERS FROM TIME TO TIME WERE BURSTS OF BRIGHT ORANGE POWDER OR SMOKE WHICH DISSIPATED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE AFTER ABOUT 30 SECONDS. (A SEPARATE SOURCE CLAIMED THAT THE POWDER SEEMED TO BURST INTO FLAME SHORTLY AFTER BEING DROPPED IN CANISTERS FROM HELICOPTERS.) THE SCENE WAS REPEATED ON AUGUST 17, AND ABOUT HALF OF THE SOVIET GROUND FORCE REMAINED CAMPED IN THE VICINITY ON AUGUST 18. (ONE SOURCE SPECULATED THAT THEY REMAINED TO GUARD AGAINST A POSSIBLE MUJAHEDDIN DEMONSTRATION AT THE PAGHMAN VICTORY ARCH. THE ARCH WAS BUILT TO COMMEMORATE THE 1919 TREATY OF RAMALPINDI WHICH ACCORDED AFGHANISTAN COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE BRITISH. AFGHANS CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARY ON AUGUST 19 WITH A NATIONAL HOLIDAY.) AT LEAST 200 VILLAGERS FROM THE AREA HAVE FLED INTO KABUL.

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TO AVOID TROUBLE. THOSE REMAINING IN AND AROUND PAGHMAN ARE AFRAID TO APPROACH THE BATTLE AREA TO LOOK FOR CASUALTIES BECAUSE THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THE ORANGE MATERIAL WAS "POISON GAS." (COMMENT: WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.)

6. AFGHAN POLICE, OFTEN AIDED BY SOVIET TROOPS (ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT) HAVE SLIGHTLY STEPPED UP STOPCHECKS OF VEHICLES AND NEIGHBORHOODS IN KABUL IN THE PAST THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS. THEIR ZEAL HAS PROBABLY BEEN PROMPTED BY A RESURGENCE OF NIGHTLY ASSASSINATIONS IN THE CITY, IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL RUMORS OF IMPENDING VIOLENCE. THE MOST DRAMATIC OF THE KILLINGS THAT WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT, IF TRUE, WAS THAT OF SABRAK KARMA'S BROTHER'S SON. (WHICH BROTHER IS UNCLEAR.) HE WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN KILLED FOR KAD, THE SECRET POLICE, AND TO HAVE BEEN GUNNED DOWN BY KHALQIS ON AUGUST 16. (WHOMEVER WAS KILLED, THERE WERE TWO LARGE FUNERALS IN THE SHAR-I-NAU DISTRICT ON AUGUST 15

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AND 16, BOTH GUARDED BY UNUSUALLY HEAVY SECURITY CONTINGENTS.)

7. AFGHAN TRAVELERS REACHING KABUL REPORT AN UPSURGE IN FIGHTING IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY DURING THE PAST TEN DAYS. SOME OF THE HEAVIEST ACTION IS SAID TO BE TAKING PLACE IN HERAT, WHERE THE SOVIETS HAVE MAINTAINED THE SECURITY OF THE HIGHWAY FROM THE BORDER TO SHINCANG AIR FORCE BASE, BUT HAVE TOLD THE INEFFECTUAL DRA AUTHORITIES THAT THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR QUELLING TROUBLES IN THE CITY. (SIMILAR REPORTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM GHAZNI, KANDAHAR, KUNDUZ AND JALALABAD.) THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR HAS HEARD THAT PARTS OF HERAT HAVE BEEN HEAVILY BOMBED BUT HE WAS UNCERTAIN BY WHOM.

8. OTHER BATTLES ARE SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE RECENTLY IN CHAK, TANGI AND NARKH (PHONETIC) TOWNS IN WARDAK PROVINCE.

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INSURGENTS ALLEGEDLY STOLE FOUR TRUCKS OF GRAIN FROM THE GOVERNMENT SILO IN KANDAHAR ON AUGUST 10. OTHER MUJAHEDDIN REPORTEDLY CAPTURED 35 ARTILLERY PIECES FROM AFGHAN TROOPS ON AUGUST 11 NEAR POL-I-MATAK ON THE MAZAR-I-SHARIF HIGHWAY NEAR CHARIKAR. FURTHER NORTH AT POL-I-KHUMRI, A FUEL STORAGE TANK WAS BLOWN UP, APPARENTLY BY RESISTANCE FIGHTERS, ON AUGUST 2. THE SAME GROUP WAS SAID TO HAVE BLOWN SEVERAL SEGMENTS OF A NEARBY FUEL PIPELINE. (IT HAS SINCE BEEN REPAIRED; THIS COULD ACCOUNT FOR THE RECENT FUEL SHORTAGE IN KABUL.)

9. AFGHAN GROUPS, ACCORDING TO ONE CONTACT, HAVE ENGAGED IN BATTLES WITH MUJAHEDDIN AT UNIDENTIFIED LOCATIONS IN SAMANGAN, KUNDUZ AND TARKAR PROVINCES, AS WELL AS NEAR GARDEZ IN PAKTIA PROVINCE. A GROUP OF AFGHAN PILOTS WAS REPORTEDLY NABBED BY INSURGENTS SHORTLY AFTER LEAVING BAGRAM AIR FORCE BASE ON THEIR WAY HOME ON AUGUST 11. SEVERAL TRAVELERS HAVE INFORMED US THAT, WHILE IT HAS BEEN REOPENED, THE HIGHWAY FROM KABUL TO JALALABAD AND THE PAKISTAN BORDER REMAINS UNSAFE. SOME VEHICLES ARE OFTEN STOPPED AND FORCED TO PAY A TAX OF AFS 500 OR 100 (AFS 44 EQUAL \$1) BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO PROCEED.

10. THE MFA INVITED DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO ONE OF ITS PERIODIC PROPAGANDA SHOWS ON AUGUST 17. (WE DID NOT ATTEND.) THE EVENT CONSISTED OF A STANDARD DIATRIBE AGAINST "AGENTS OF US IMPERIALISM, CHINESE CHAUVINISM AND REGIONAL REACTION," INCLUDING A CONFUSED STATEMENT THAT SEVERAL

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AMERICANS, PAKISTANIS, IRANIANS AND EGYPTIANS HAD BEEN CAPTURED.  
(LATER, THE MFA ADMITTED THAT THE STATEMENT REFERRED  
TO TWO AMERICANS ARRESTED LAST FEBRUARY AND RELEASED IN MARCH.)  
ONE ALLEGED IRAMIAN "BANDIT" WAS DISPLAYED TO THE AUDIENCE.  
EMBASSIES HAVE ALSO RECEIVED INVITATIONS TO ANOTHER DISPLAY  
OF "CAPTURED AMERICAN, CHINESE, BRITISH AND PAKISTANI ARMS"  
ON AUGUST 20.  
GRIFFIN

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